

emergency/urgency. It has, however, been found that in some cases where negative or incomplete police reports have been received by the Passport Offices, there have been some delays in issuing new Passports. In such cases, necessary follow-up action is invariably taken by the concerned Passport Officers in getting complete reports from the concerned police authorities and also by advising the applicants to approach the concerned police authorities with original documents/court order to get clear reports from them on the basis of which passports are then issued.

(c) and (d). The number of employees in Regional Passport Office, Mumbai are as per prescribed norms and keeping in view the volume of work handled by this office, the existing staff strength appears to be adequate.

(e) and (f). The possibility of setting up another Passport office is being examined. In the meantime it is proposed to open a Passport Collection Centre at Thane.

[English]

Construction of Tunnel under Rohtang Pass

2963. SHRI SUKH RAM : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to construct a tunnel under Rohtang Pass;

(b) if so, whether any survey was conducted for the same; and

(c) if so, the progress made in construction of the tunnel under Rohtang Pass and expenditure incurred thereon so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) and (b). The feasibility study of constructing a tunnel has been entrusted to M/s. RITES.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Repair of N.H. in Gujarat

2964. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Highway between Bharuch and Wapi needs repair and the aforesaid highway is under enormous traffic pressure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any repair work is likely to be undertaken on the National Highway between Ahmedabad and Mumbai during 1996-97; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) The Bharuch-Wapi section of National Highway 8 is heavily trafficked and is being maintained in a traffic worthy condition within the available resources.

(b) For maintenance and repairs of National Highways including the Bharuch-Wapit section, the following releases have been made :

1994-95	:	Rs. 1316.64 lakhs
1995-96	:	Rs. 1745.20 lakhs
1996-97	:	Rs. 391.30 lakhs (upto July, 1996)

(c) and (d). No Flood Damage Repair estimate for the year 1996-97 has been received for the National Highway from Ahmedabad to Mumbai.

[English]

Inter-State Transport Schemes

2965. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of important inter-state transport schemes sanctioned during the last three years; and

(b) the details thereof and the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b). As per information obtained from the State Governments no such scheme has been sanctioned for any State/Union Territories except in case of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli. Reply from these States/ Union Territories have not been received.

Imported Contraceptives

2966. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether huge consignment of imported contraceptives for the national family planning programme has been found faulty by the statutory testing authority;

(b) whether any investigations have been made in the matter; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) to (c). Samples from an imported consignment of tubal rings were found not meeting one of the parameters of BIS specifications in the testing Laboratory at IIT. However, samples were found acceptable when retested at another laboratory. The

test reports of the second laboratory was evaluated by Drugs Controller of India before certifying that they meet BIS specifications. Hence the question of conducting any investigation does not arise.

[Translation]

Anomaly in Pensions

2967. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to bring parity in the pension of earlier and recently retired army men; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) and (b). There has been some disparity in the amount of pension of persons retired at various point of time. The disparity is due to the fact that the pension is linked to the pay drawn at the time of retirement and the length of qualifying service rendered by the individual. For reducing disparity in pension of pre and post 1986 pensioners, the pension of pre 1.1.86 defence pensioners was consolidated by recalculating their pension by applying 50 percent formula and merging dearness relief upto CPI 608. A scheme for One Time Increase in pension (OTI) has also been sanctioned w.e.f. 1.1.92 to pre 1986 defence pensioners. About 8.03 lakhs defence pensioners who retired prior to 1.1.86 are expected to benefit from the OTI Scheme.

2. The above measures have substantially narrowed down to disparities in pension between pre and post 1986 pensioners.

Flyover on N.H. 31

2968. SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether proposals are pending with the Government for constructing flyovers on National Highway No.31;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

State Highways into National Highways

2969. DR. SAHEBRAO SUKRAM BAGUL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government propose to convert

the 11 State Highways proposed by the Maharashtra Government into National Highways:

(b) if so, the time by which these State Highways would be declared as National Highways; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) and (c). Due to paucity of funds for the development of National Highways during the 8th Plan, it has not been possible to declare this road as National Highways.

Funds For Research Proposals

2970. PROF. OMPAL SINGH NIDAR :

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the University Grants Commission has been unable to fund a large number of research proposals of vital importance due to shortage of funds;

(b) if so, the details of these proposals which could not be financed by UGC due to shortage of funds; and

(c) the future plan of action, if any, so that research projects do not suffer on account of inadequate funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA) : (a) to (c). University Grants Commission (UGC) provides requisite financial assistance to various universities and colleges for execution of research projects in different subjects and disciplines. According to the information furnished by UGC, during 1995-96, 52 Major and 54 Minor Research Project proposals in Sciences and 80 Major and 36 Minor Research Project proposals in Humanities and Social Sciences were approved as the first priority and funded as per the prescribed norms. Besides, 53 Major and 3 Minor Research Project proposals in Engineering & Technology were also approved in the first priority category. It has, however, not been possible to accommodate all proposals due to constraint of financial resources.

[English]

Loss of Life and Property by Floods in U.P.

2971. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the regions in Uttar Pradesh which had floods during the current monsoon and the total loss of life and property suffered on that account;

(b) the factors primarily responsible for floods in the State, region-wise/place-wise;